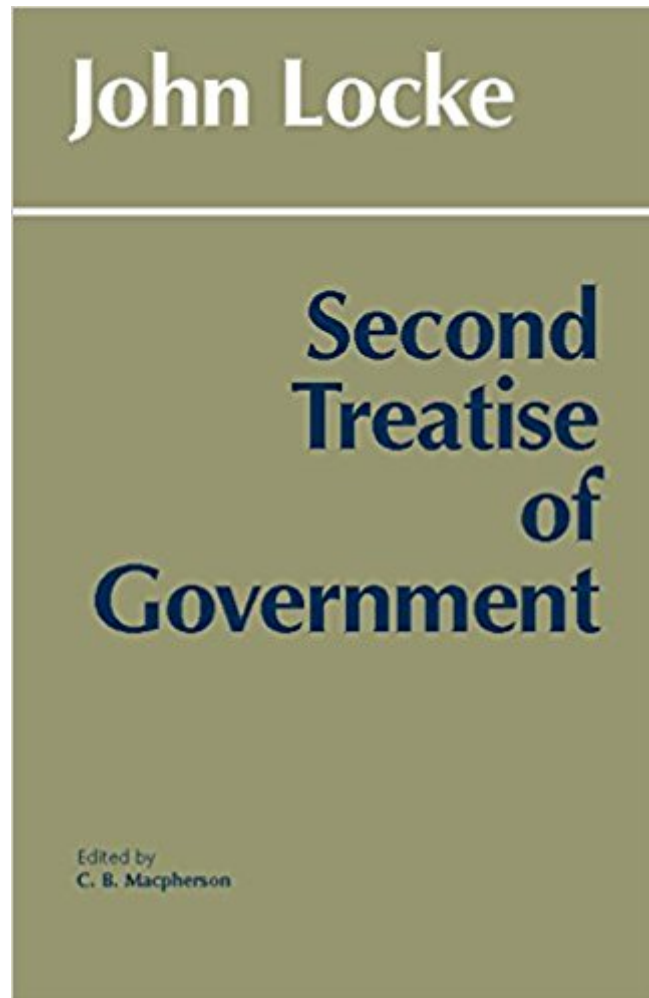




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Second Treatise Of Government (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

The Second Treatise is one of the most important political treatises ever written and one of the most far-reaching in its influence. In his provocative 15-page introduction to this edition, the late eminent political theorist C. B. Macpherson examines Locke's arguments for limited, conditional government, private property, and right of revolution and suggests reasons for the appeal of these arguments in Locke's time and since.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Macpherson provides for his readers a tightly written, meaty, and often invigorating critical assessment of Locke's argument. In it one finds some of the best of Macpherson's now famous criticism of liberal-democratic government. --Gregory E. Pyrcz in *Canadian Philosophical Review*

Philosopher, son of a landsteward, was born at Wrington, near Bristol, and educated at Westminster School and Oxford. In 1660 Locke became lecturer on Greek, in 1662 on Rhetoric, and in 1664 he went as secretary to an Embassy to Brandenburg. While a student he turned from the subtleties of Aristotle and the schoolmen, had studied Descartes and Bacon. Then, becoming attracted to experimental science, studied medicine, and practiced a little in Oxford. His mind had been much exercised by questions of morals and government, and in 1667 he wrote his *Essay on Toleration*. If not a very profound or original philosopher Locke was a calm, sensible, and reasonable writer, and his books were very influential on the English thought of his day, as well as on the French

philosophy of the next century. His style is plain and clear, but lacking in brightness and variety.

Great product. (This is a review of the recording by Knowledge Products, in its Giants of Political Thought series, part of its Audio Classics series, of John Locke's Two Treatises of Government.) This product explains in a very interesting manner the political context of 17th century Britain, in which Locke's two treatises were written. They were not written purely as a theoretical tract. They were actually written during revolutionary plots in which Locke was participating. He was no armchair political theorist. He was knee deep in revolutionary intrigue. This product also discusses the FIRST treatise of government -- on ecclesiastical government, which is rarely read or discussed. It's fascinating. George H. Smith did a great job in writing the script of this work on Locke and his two treatises. This product is recorded professionally by professional voice actors, with a full cast of actors. This makes it more interesting to listen to. I have listened to it probably a dozen times. Each time, I find something interesting.

It is well known, of course, that John Locke was a major inspiration behind the Founding Fathers. With this book, it is easy to understand why. In the "First Essay On Government", Locke takes the argument of the "divine right" of kings--and uses a brilliant, clever, and effective combination of Biblical theology and logical argument to completely obliterate that concept. With that out of the way, Locke turned to write his "Second Essay On Civil Government", where the question is asked: Now that we have disproved any "entitlement" to royalty...where do we go from here? What is the basis for governing a civil society? The major highlight of this treatise is Chapter 2, in which Locke formally establishes the doctrine of Natural Rights. He starts with the natural state of Man, leading up to the necessary elements of Man's existence--the philosophical necessities, of course, being "rights". There is an interesting moment where Locke questions whether a citizen of one society should ever be punished for breaking the laws of another society, even if said citizen is IN that other society. It's worth noting that Locke was quick to note that it is a QUESTION, not a statement of belief. Perhaps it's his idea of a "modest proposal". Contrary to popular belief, Locke is not a "Poor Man's Hobbes" or a "Confused Man's Hobbes". Locke's views on rights and Liberty have quite a few differences from Hobbes's: while often subtle, they are very important, indeed. It becomes clear while reading Locke's prescriptions for government--including the people's rights to alter or abolish it--that Locke would not have recommended an authoritarian government of the likes of the Leviathan! Finally, there is "A Letter Concerning Toleration". Here, Locke tackles the issue of "separation of church and state". He discusses what it truly means...and how it does NOT mean the

weaking of religion that secular progressives of the Left desire it to mean. To the contrary, abolishing a state religion, Locke argues, actually should STRENGTHEN the religious element of a free society. John Locke was, in short, a man years ahead of his time. It is a tragedy that few, if any, in government have seemed willing to listen to him.

To be honest, the only reason why I gave this so many stars was because it was a product that spurred wide spread enlightenment thinking. He has society challenging ideas on how a master ought to treat a servant, that women and men ought to divorce if they so choose after their children reach the age of reason, as well as the idea of the corruption of absolute/arbitrary power. On the other side, there is A LOT of repetition as well as a silly notion that only those who consented to unjust war are at risk of slavery/death, deciding who was consensual and who wasn't would require some mind reading.

Wow! Where has this book been hiding? Why isn't the 2nd Treatise required reading in every High School? As I read this book I kept running into familiar phrases and ideas from America's founding era. It completely destroys the credibility of a king (or any politician, even if elected) who claims authority to rule over other people. I especially liked Chapter 2 of the 2nd treatise, only 9 pages, which explains the concept of equality and natural law. We are all born into a state of nature, no one wants to submit his life to another's will, therefore no one should want to impose his will on another, because we are all of the same human nature. It really solidifies the "why" of respect and tolerance for our fellow man. It's a slow, hard read (for me), but well worth it to understand how America, using some simple truths, changed the course of human history. I was patriotic before, but now I know WHY I'm so lucky to be American, I can explain it. I see these ideas in the first 4 sentences of the Declaration of Independence. Please read Chapter 2 (9 pages) of the 2nd Treatise at a library, even if you don't read the whole book.

This is John Locke in the raw, without the mass of commentary, description and interpretation provided in many other copies.

Two Treatises of Government by John Locke Published Everyman Library... Best books ever written at lowest possible price that everyone should read. When Monarchs ruled the world they wanted God's approval and used the likes of Sir Robert Filmer to twisted the Bible and justify tyranny. Two Treatises demolished the divine right of rulers. It is an exhaustive analysis that silences every

possible argument by the Bible. The book shows we are designed by God to be free..... Topics: property rights, rights of women & children, the need for economic prosperity for society, need for separation of powers. America is free in part because of John Locke's courage. He was an inspiration for The Declaration of Independence, and other founding documents. John Locke shows the importance of not letting our freedom erode away bit by bit. Freedom is not free, it has to be safeguarded and defended. Reading this book to exercising your mind. He is brilliant. Everyone needs this knowledge to defend our God given freedom.

Good read

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